



COVID-19 Outbreak Control and Prevention State Cell

Health & Family Welfare Department

Government of Kerala

Advisory on Pooled Testing for COVID in Truenat/ Xpert

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ICMR has recommended pooling of samples when the test positive ratio is less than 2%. Based on this Department of Health and Family Welfare, Government of Kerala has issued advisory on performing pooled sample testing using RTPCR on May 12th 2020.

Two laboratories in Kerala has field tested pooled testing using Xpert and TrueNAT platform. Based on the findings, following advisory is issued regarding pooling of samples for COVID testing using Xpert and TrueNAT tests.

Sample processing protocol for Truenat pooled sample testing for elective surgeries

- Donn adequate PPE as per guidelines
- Transfer 0.5 mL of 5 samples from specimen containing transport medium tube utilizing 5 different 1ml transfer pipettes into a single sterile 5ml vial inside a biosafety cabinet for pooling.
- Take 0.5 ml of pooled sample and add into the LYSIS BUFFER Tube using 1 mL Transfer Pipette
- Continue the rest of the steps as per trueNAT sample processing protocol.

Sample processing protocol for Cepheid Xpert - Xpress SARS-Cov-2 pooled sample testing for elective surgeries

- Enrobe adequate PPE as per guidelines
- Transfer 300 microlitre of 5 samples from the transport medium into a single 2ml vial, cap the vial tightly and rapidly invert the tube 5 times inside the biosafety cabinet for pooling.
- Open the cartridge lid and load 300 microlitre of the pooled sample from the 2ml vial into the cartridge. Close the lid and run the test as per the protocol.



Precaution: It is instructed NOT to pool samples from (1) Symptomatic patients who have undertaken international/interstate travel in last 14 days and (2) Symptomatic contacts of laboratory confirmed case and (3) samples of emergency nature like emergency surgery.

Principal Secretary